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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3848
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0329
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 0183
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0688
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE PRIORITY
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 001344

SIPDIS

ENERGY FOR LEINSTEIN, HQ SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD, TREASURY
FOR MKACZMAREK, COMMERCE FOR 4332/MAC/WH/JLAO, NSC FOR
DRESTREPO AND LROSELLO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/15/2019

TAGS: [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [EPET](#) [KNNP](#) [PREL](#) [RU](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: RUSSIA HAS NO PLANS TO BUILD NUCLEAR REACTORS IN
VENEZUELA

REF: A. (A) CARACAS 1296

[1](#)B. 1236

[1](#)C. 853

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Classified By: Ambassador Patrick Duddy for reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: During an October 15 initial courtesy call
with Ambassador Duddy, Russian Ambassador Zaemsky denied
reports that Russia would help Venezuela build nuclear
reactors, saying that its nuclear cooperation with Venezuela
was limited to the medical field and food controls. With
respect to recent arms purchases, Zaemsky said that there
were controls with respect to the transfer of weapons to
third countries and that Russia will meet its international
obligations to report on sales. He also stated that
Gazprom's exploration in Venezuela has not resulted in the
discovery of commercially viable quantities of gas in the
areas assigned to them. End Summary.

NO NUCLEAR PLANTS

[1](#)2. (C) Ambassador Zaemsky stated that reports of Russia
helping Venezuela to build nuclear reactors were untrue.
However, he did say that the Russians will be cooperating
with Venezuela to use nuclear energy in the medical field and
in the area of food controls (Reftel A). In a separate
meeting on October 16, the Russian DCM reiterated that
Russian-Venezuelan nuclear cooperation will be transparent
and consistent with international safeguards and was only in
the areas mentioned by the Ambassador.

TRANSPARENCY IN ARMS SALES TO VENEZUELA

[1](#)3. (C) According to Ambassador Zaemsky, Russia has been clear
with Venezuela about the need for transparency in the
purchases Venezuela is making of portable weapons systems
from Russia. He stated that controls exist in these
transactions but did not elaborate on the type of controls
being enforced. Further, he said that Russia has informed

Venezuela that the GOR will be diligent in meeting the reporting requirements of its international treaties.

FEW RESULTS IN GAS EXPLORATION

¶4. (C) Responding to an inquiry about Gazprom's involvement in the development of the gas industry in Venezuela, Ambassador Zaemsky indicated that the areas that have been designated for Russia to explore have not yet yielded commercially viable reserves that would warrant significant Russian investment (Reftels B & C). If this happens eventually, however, he indicated that the gas would likely be sold within the Western Hemisphere.

BUREAUCRACY WOES FOR THE RUSSIANS, TOO

¶5. (C) Despite the warm bilateral relationship, Russian companies have had some trouble navigating the Venezuelan bureaucracy. Ambassador Zaemsky related that he recently had to make phone calls to the Venezuelan government to help a Russian company.

VENEZUELA: NOT WHAT HE EXPECTED

¶6. (C) Ambassador Zaemsky, who served previously in Venezuela in the 1970s, spoke about three specific new elements of Venezuelan life that he has found surprising. First, he said he was struck by the polarization of Venezuelan society.

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Second, he was surprised by the degree to which the Venezuelan opposition was divided. Third, he questioned whether Venezuela has any political-economic vision for the future.

RUSSIAN TOURISTS PREFER THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

¶7. (C) Ambassador Zaemsky, who is also accredited as Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and Haiti, noted the great increase in Russian tourist travel to the Dominican Republic, saying that it now exceeds Cuba as a Caribbean destination for Russian tourist groups.

BIO NOTES

¶8. (C) Ambassador Zaemsky graduated from the State Institute of International Relations in 1974 and from the State Service Academy in 2000. He began his diplomatic career in 1974 when he was 22 years old. He has served at various Russian missions in the Western Hemisphere, including Costa Rica, Venezuela (previously), Mexico, the United States, and the United Nations. He was appointed Ambassador to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in June 2009. In addition, Ambassador Zaemsky has served as the Vice-Director of the Russian Federation's Department of Foreign Relations for North America from 2002-04. Since 2004, he has served as the Vice-Director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department of International Organizations. He speaks Spanish fluently, speaks English (but prefers Spanish), is married, and has two daughters.

DUDDY